IS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PROTESTANT?

A HISTORICAL ESSAY.

By HOMERSHAM COX, M.A.

A JUDGE OF COUNTY COURTS.

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PREFACE

SOME PARTS of the following Essay appeared, in July last, in letters which I published under the same title, in the *Daily Telegraph*. These letters produced a great multitude of replies, addressed, some to the Editor, some to me personally. Many of them were acrimonious and minatory. Others were argumentative; and these I have carefully considered before writing this paper. Others strongly urged me to republish my letters in a separate form. This suggestion was made by persons of such eminence and authority, that it seemed a sufficient encouragement for putting together the following observations. They give a most imperfect and inadequate view of the subject. In the compass of a few pages it was not possible to contain a theme to which the great masters of English theology have devoted vast stores of learning and research.

HOMERSHAM COX.

INNER TEMPLE:
Oct. 1874.

IS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PROTESTANT?

MUCH DEPENDS at the present time on the answer to this question. If the Church of England is correctly designated Protestant, the Evangelical party has an almost unassailable position. Their argument stands simply thus: The Church is Protestant—*ergo*, we are justified in upholding the thing called Protestantism, and in using our utmost endeavours to repress opposition to it by vigorous legislation.

But the first step in the argument is based on an unproved assumption. Search the Prayer Book through, and you will not find the word 'Protestant' once used. Nowhere in the Articles, Liturgy, or Homilies does it occur. If there were one instance—only one solitary instance—in which the designation had been adopted by our Church; if on any single occasion, from the period of the Reformation until the present time, she had so designated herself; the Evangelicals would have some justification for their persistent endeavours to assimilate the English Church to the Kirk of Scotland and the Lutheran and Calvinistic congregations of the Continent.

Mere reiteration, however frequent or vehement, will not supply the place of proof. If the Church be Protestant, how easy must it be to point to the passage or passages in her authentic records in which the title is assumed! As I said, much depends on this preliminary proof. Show that the title is correct, and it only remains to give a definition of Protestantism sufficiently wide in order to build on this basis a structure of any desired height. All that is wanting is the foundation of the edifice.

The object of the following pages is to show that not only has the Church never assumed the *name* 'Protestant,' but—what is more important—that she has never in *fact* been Protestant, either in her doctrines or her ecclesiastical relations.

§ 1. *The Reformation was independent of Lutheranism and Calvinism.*

The term Protestant originated in Germany. The Diet at Speyer in 1526 passed decrees favourable to Lutheranism; but at another Diet held at the same place in 1529, Charles V. promulgated an Imperial brief annulling those decrees. Thereupon the Lutherans and Zuinglians offered to the Diet a *protest* against the Emperor's brief. The princes and cities favourable to the Reformation joined in this protest, and thence arose the title of Protestants.

Efforts were made by Henry VIII. from motives of policy to promote some communication between the German reformers and the English Church. But those efforts resulted in utter failure. In 1535 Henry made overtures of this kind to the Protestant princes of Germany, but they refused to accept his proposals unless he subscribed the Confession of Augsburg, and that he declined to do. Another similar attempt was made in 1538 when certain Lutheran ministers held conferences in London with a commission appointed by Henry, and consisting of Archbishop Cranmer, two other bishops, and four doctors. But the attempt to unite the Lutherans in one common doctrine with the Church of England altogether failed as soon as the Sacraments came under consideration—(Blunt's 'Reformation,' p. 472; Jenkyns's 'Remains of Cranmer,' p. 22). Cranmer in a letter (August 23, 1538) to Crumwell attributes the failure of the negotiations to the bishops who were associated with him. He says, 'They have required me to entreat now of the Sacraments, of Matrimony, Orders, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction; wherein they know certainly that the Germans will not agree with us, except it be in matrimony only. So that I perceive that the bishops seek only an occasion to break the concord'—(Jenkyns, vol. I., p. 264).

Nowhere throughout this correspondence does Cranmer use the word 'Protestants.'

After the accession of Edward VI. Cranmer renewed the attempt to arrange a general Confession of Faith for all the Reformed Churches, and invited several continental celebrities to hold a meeting in England for the purpose. In a Latin letter, addressed to Melancthon, in 1549, he states that many pious and learned men, partly from Italy and partly from Germany, have assembled with him, and that others are

expected daily, and entreats him to adorn this assembly with his presence. To Calvin, in 1552, he writes (in Latin), 'Our adversaries are now holding their councils at Trent, that they may establish errors, and shall we neglect to assemble our pious synod that we may refute errors and reform and propagate doctrines?'—(Jenkyns, vol. I., p. 337, 346). But this project of drawing up a joint Confession of Faith completely failed, and shortly afterwards it was determined to settle a separate Confession for the Church of England.

These transactions are important, because they show distinctly that our Church was never in communion with the Protestants of the Continent during the lives of our principal Reformers. Not only was not such a communion established, but the chief promoter abandoned the attempt to establish it as impracticable. We see from the letters of Cranmer, already quoted, how much he laid the matter to heart. In the letter to Crumwell he reproaches the other bishops as the cause of the failure. His earnest invitations to Melancthon, Calvin, and others, show that he felt deeply on the subject. It does not appear that Cranmer's enterprise received any official sanction either from the Church or the State. It was exclusively his own; and he discovered for himself that the difficulties were insuperable. Calvin answered him with fair words, but begged to be excused from attending. Melancthon also declined to be present. Cranmer recognising the hopelessness of the cherished project of a joint confession, addressed himself to the composition of a separate formulary—the Forty-two Articles of Religion—which received the sanction of Edward VI. in 1552. Thus the Church retained her ecclesiastical independence of German Lutheranism and French Calvinism.

Heylyn's account of Calvin's connection with the English Reformation appears somewhat inconsistent with Cranmer's letters just quoted. Referring to the directions of Edward VI., in 1548, for the compilation of a Liturgy, Heylyn says in his 'History of the Reformation,' p. 65, 'Those who had the chief directing of this weighty business were beforehand resolved that none but English heads or hands should be used therein; lest otherwise it might be thought, and perhaps objected, that they rather followed the example of other churches, or were swayed by the authority of those foreign assistants, than by the Word of God and the most uncorrupted practice of the primitive times. Certain it is that upon the very first reports of a Reformation here intended, Calvin had offered his

assistance to Archbishop Cranmer, as himself confesseth. But the archbishop knew the man and refused the offer.' The only mode of reconciling this account of Calvin's interference in 1548 with Cranmer's invitation to him in 1552 is by supposing that in the interval the archbishop's policy had undergone a change. Certain it is that Calvin officiously attempted to improve our Church. In a letter to Edward VI. he urged the need of further reformation, and to Cranmer he was good enough to state that 'in the service of this Church as then it stood there remained a whole mass of Popery which did not only darken but destroyed God's worship'—(Heylyn, p. 107). Our Reformed Church had also the misfortune of incurring the disapproval of Calvin's intimate friend, John Knox: 'Of England then he had no plesur, be reassone that the Paipes name being suppressed, his lawes and corruptionis remaned in full vigour.'

This was immediately after Knox had avowed his approval of the murder of Cardinal Beatoun, and openly allied himself with the murderers. Their bloody deed he called a 'godly fact'—(Hardwick, 'History of the Church of England,' 4th ed. p. 135). The Church of England was not good enough for this aider and abettor of assassins.

An illustration of the earliest use of the word 'Protestant' in England occurs in the 'Brief Declaration of the Lord's Supper,' written by Bishop Ridley during his imprisonment at Oxford. 'My tongue and pen,' he says, 'as long as I may shall freely set forth that which undoubtedly I am persuaded to be the truth of God's Word. And yet I will do it under this protestation, call me Protestant who listeth, I pass not thereof. My protestation shall be thus; that my mind is and ever shall be (God willing) to set forth sincerely the true sense and meaning, to the best of my understanding, of God's most Holy Word'—('Works of Ridley,' ed. for Parker Society, p. 14). It is obvious from this passage that 'Protestant' was then esteemed a word of reproach. Ridley says, 'Call me a Protestant who listeth, I pass not thereof,' i.e., I care not for it. He speaks of the appellation as one not chosen by himself, but forced upon him by adversaries.

Ridley to the end of his life considered the Lutherans and our Reformed Church opposed on points of fundamental importance. In the conference with Secretary Bourn and Mr. Fecknam in the Tower, Fecknam having quoted a sentence from the writings of Melancthon, Ridley replies, 'as for Melancthon whom Mr. Fecknam spoke of, I marvel that

ye will allege him; for we are more nigh unto an agreement here in England than the opinion of Melancthon to you; for in this point we all agree here that there is in the sacrament but one material substance; and Melancthon, as I ween saith, there are two'—('Ridley's Works,' p. 160).

This passage alone is fatal to the theory that the Reformers united with the German Protestants. On the contrary, Ridley says that with respect to the all-important subject of the sacrament there was not so wide a difference between the Reformers and the Romanists as between them and the Lutherans, who adopted the doctrine of consubstantiation.

An even more forcible protest against Protestantism occurs in the writings of Latimer. In an answer to a letter from Dr. Sherwood, who charged him with borrowing ideas, he says in his usual fervent way, 'I said nothing (I call God to witness that I lie not) which I borrowed from Luther, Œcolampadius, or Melancthon; yet you hesitate not (such is your charity to fix this charge upon me). If I have done this thing, may I fall as I deserve stript bare by mine enemies. But you know not, methinks, what spirit you are of, while you would rather assail a minister of God's Word with your most impudent falsehoods, than bear testimony to the truth'—'Works of Latimer,' vol. II., ed. for Parker Society, p. 315).

Those who imagine there was any approach on the part of our Reformers to Lutheranism or Protestantism are utterly ignorant of the nature of the Lutheran creed. Luther taught the doctrine of consubstantiation, or impanation—the presence of two substances, the Body of our Lord, and the natural substance of bread and wine existing together in the consecrated elements. Cranmer, at an early period of his career, had a similar belief, though he afterwards entirely discarded it. But Latimer and Ridley, throughout their teaching, denied a corporeal real presence, and thought the Lutheran consubstantiation every whit as erroneous as Roman transubstantiation. Thus, in disputation at Oxford during the imprisonment of Latimer, when the Prolocutor tells Latimer, 'You were once a Lutheran?' he replies, 'No, I was a Papist; for I never could perceive how Luther could defend his opinion without transubstantiation'—('Latimer's Works,' vol. II., p. 486). The faith, in defence of which he was about to suffer a cruel death, differed *toto cœlo* from that of the German Reformers; and they who call the English martyrs Protestants do so either in sheer ignorance of the meaning of the word, or from a wanton love of paradox.

There is an amusing story respecting the consecration of John Hooper to the bishopric of Gloucester, which shows that Cranmer and Ridley were determined opponents of the unceremoniousness of Swiss Protestantism. Hooper, when the terrible Act of the Six Articles was passed in the reign of Henry VIII., forsook the kingdom, and settled at Zurich. After the death of Henry VIII., he returned, 'bringing with him some very strong affections to the nakedness of the Zuinglian or Helvetian Churches'—(Heylyn, 'History of the Reformation,' 3rd edit., p. 90). By his preaching and writings, he obtained the favour of the Earl of Warwick, by whose procurement Edward VI. bestowed on him the bishopric of Gloucester. Hooper objected to the episcopal robes, but the archbishop refused to consecrate him except in the habit which bishops were required by the rules of the Church to wear. Thereupon, the Earl of Warwick wrote to the archbishop a letter 'desiring a forbearance of those things in which the Lord Elect of Gloucester did crave to be forborn at his hands,' and also 'that he would not charge him with an oath which seemed to be burthensome to his conscience'; for the elect bishop objected also to the oath binding him to pay canonical obedience to his Metropolitan. But as the archbishop persisted in his denial, and was seconded by Ridley, Bishop of London, the King himself was induced by the Earl of Warwick to write a letter under the Royal signet to the archbishop, stating that Hooper desired the omission of certain ceremonies offensive to his conscience, and discharging the archbishop from all penalties to which he might become liable by omitting them.

The next proceeding is not a little curious. The new bishop 'still persisting in his obstinacy and artful humour was finally, for his disobedience and contempt, committed prisoner, and from the prison writes his letter to Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr for their opinion of the case.' Peter Martyr was known to be strongly opposed to the use of the surplice. About the same time Calvin wrote to the Lord Protector begging him to lend Hooper a helping hand. Notwithstanding the influences arrayed against them—those of the Lord Protector, the King, and the foreigners—Cranmer and Ridley continued firm in their opinions. The matter ended in a compromise. It was arranged that Hooper should receive consecration in the usual episcopal robes, and should wear them on occasions of public ceremony, but should be excused from wearing them as his daily habit. Accordingly, when he

preached before the King he was apparelled in a long scarlet chimere reaching down to the ground, and under that a white linen rochet, with a square cap on his head, 'which Fox reproacheth by the name of Popish attire, and makes to be a great cause of shame and contumely to that godly man'—(Heylin, p. 91). To us at the present day there is something almost comic in the story. We should think it scarcely decent to send a clergyman to prison as a preliminary to his consecration. The whole narrative is, however, pregnant with instruction. It shows that Cranmer and Ridley, even at this advanced stage of the Reformation, stoutly and successfully resisted court influences and foreign interference in favour of Protestant innovations.

§ 2. *The Doctrines of the Reformation opposed to Modern Protestantism.*

It is certain that the doctrines of the Reformation differed fundamentally from those of modern Protestantism. Take for example the favourite tenets of the Evangelical school respecting conversion and regeneration. 'Conversion,' says a modern writer of this class, 'denotes that change in the dispositions, thoughts, desires, and objects of affection which takes place in the heart of a sinner when the Holy Spirit convinces him of his sinfulness, and leads him by His sacred influences to hate sin and to forsake every evil and false way, and at the same time persuades him to yield to the claims which God his Saviour justly and graciously makes to his heart and life. The same thing is signified by the terms *new birth* and *regeneration*'—(Eadie's 'Bible Cyclopædia,' *sub voce* 'Conversion'). Bunyan, who is a great favourite of the Evangelical party, thus describes Hopeful's conversion: 'One day I was very sad, I think, sadder than at any one time in my life; and this sadness was through a fresh sight of the greatness and vileness of my sins. And as I was then looking for nothing but hell and the everlasting damnation of my soul, suddenly as I thought, I saw the Lord Jesus looking down upon me'—('Pilgrim's Progress'). Then, after a dialogue supposed to be carried on between him and our Lord, he concludes, 'And now was my heart full of joy, mine eyes full of tears, and my affections running over with love to the name, people, and ways of Jesus Christ.'

It would be easy to multiply passages to the same effect from modern writings. The pages of such works as the

'Evangelical Magazine' are full of narratives of remarkable conversions. Persons in whom the supposed change has been effected are said to be 'awakened' or to be 'brought to the knowledge of the truth,' and an odd title commonly applied to them is that of 'professing' Christians.

How utterly the modern idea of regeneration differs from that of the Reformers may be easily shown by reference to authentic documents. The Articles of Religion set out by the Convocation in 1536 were subscribed by Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, sixteen Bishops, and many other members of the Upper and Lower House of Convocation—(Blunt's 'Reformation of the Church of England,' chap. viii.) The Article on Baptism states that 'it is offered to all men, as well infants as such as have the use of reason; that by baptism they shall have remission of sins, and the grace and favour of God. . . . By the Sacrament of Baptism they do obtain remission of their sins, the peace, and favour of God, and be made thereby the very sons and children of God. . . . In and by this said sacrament which they shall receive, God the Father giveth unto them for his son Jesus Christ's sake remission of all their sins, and the grace of the Holy Ghost whereby they be newly regenerated and made the very children of God'—(Todd, 'Original Sin' &c., as maintained in certain declarations of our Reformers.) Here it will be observed that regeneration is said to be effected in and by baptism, and not subsequently.

Precisely the same doctrine is expressed in the 'Institution of a Christian Man,' which has been styled 'the great dogmatical document of the Reformation'—(Blunt's 'Reformation' p. 457). This document (published in 1537) was drawn up by a Commission, of which Archbishop Cranmer and Bishops Latimer and Fox were members.

Again, the book called 'A Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man,' which was chiefly the work of Cranmer, and was revised and sanctioned by Convocation in 1543 ,declares in several places that justification is 'conferred and given in baptism or recovered again by penance'—(Todd, p. 32 and p. 42).

But the diversity between the doctrines of the Reformers and the modern Evangelical creed is, perhaps, most strikingly shown in the different ways in which they speak about conversion. The 'Institution of a Christian Man,' above cited, states that where a man after baptism is fallen again, and hath committed deadly sin, he cannot be saved without penance. When sinners convert themselves from their naughty life and

do such penance as Christ requires, they shall attain remission of sins—(Blunt, p. 440). To the same effect is the Homily of Salvation, which is ascribed on the highest authority to Cranmer—(Todd, p. 47). He says, 'Infants being baptised and dying in their infancy, are by this sacrifice washed from their sins, brought to God's favour, and made His children and inheritors of His kingdom of heaven. And they which actually do sin after their baptism, when they convert and turn again to God unfeignedly, they are likewise washed by this sacrifice from their sins.' In another part of the same homily he says we trust in the sacrifice of Christ 'to obtain thereby God's grace and remission, as well of our original sin in baptism, as of actual sin committed by us after our baptism if we truly repent and convert unfeignedly to him again.'

The language of the Reformers respecting conversion is very remarkable. They speak uniformly of the importance of sinners converting and turning to God—never of their *being converted.* The use of the passive voice by modern Evangelical writers makes all the difference between their creed and that of the old Reformers. If a man convert himself, the act is his own—the result of his own exertion. His efforts may be aided by Divine assistance, given in answer to his prayers; but he is not the passive object of a miraculous change. If he *is converted*, the operation is performed upon him by a power or agency external to himself. I assert confidently that the authentic formularies of the Reformation never speak of a sinner *being converted* in the passive voice. They uniformly use 'convert' to designate something done by men themselves.

The modern idea of conversion is that of an external or supernatural operation. I think it might easily be shown that this idea is founded on texts of Scripture mistranslated or wrested from their context. But the object of this essay is historical rather than theological, and therefore I content myself with noticing one or two very remarkable instances in which a most serious error of translation gives countenance to the modern tenet. In the discourse which follows the parable of the sower, Our Blessed Lord quotes a passage of Isaiah concluding (according to our version) with the words 'lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them'—(S. Matthew, chap. xiii. ver. 15). The phrase 'be converted' is a lamentable mistranslation of the original word ἐπιστρέψωσι which is not in the passive voice, and means 'not' *be* converted, but simply 'turn back' or 'repent.' Tyndale's translation of the verse is far more cor-

rect; it runs thus: 'For this peoples hert ys wexed grosse and their eares were dull of herynge and their eyes have they closed lest they shulde se with their eyes and heare with their eares, and shulde vnderstonde with their hertes, and shulde tourne that Y myght heale them'!

Precisely the same errors occur in the authorised version of the corresponding passages in S. Mark's Gospel (chap. iv. verse 12) and in S. Luke's Gospel (chap. viii. ver. 12). The word ἐπιστρέψωσι in S. Mark's account, is again wrongly translated 'be converted' in the passive voice, whereas it simply means 'turn' or repent.'

The corresponding passage in S. Luke's Gospel has given occasion for one of Mr. Voysey's shocking diatribes against the Bible. He says that three thousand evangelists would never convince him that the Saviour uttered the words attributed to him, and 'if we desire to retain one spark of genuine love and homage for Christ the Lord of men, we must cast aside as distortions of the noblest and loveliest of beings, these thrice told misrepresentations of His dealings with ignorant sinners'—('The Sling and the Stone,' vol. I.). The passage in S. Luke, fairly interpreted, is not liable to the animadversions implied in Mr. Voysey's question, 'Why should some be made wise unto salvation and others purposely left in the dark?' S. Luke is reporting the same conversation as S. Matthew, but more concisely. Both refer to the same speech of our Lord, and therefore both must be understood in the same sense—which is obviously this—that as the multitude turned a deaf ear to the instruction of our Lord, he would not waste it upon them. They would not turn that he might heal them. Therefore he reserved the explanation of the parable for those who showed a willingness to learn.

I have given two instances in which the phrase 'be converted,' in our version of the New Testament, is altogether repugnant to the sense of the original Greek. I will add just one more, that in which our Lord, addressing S. Peter, says, 'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy strength fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren'—(S. Luke, xxii. 31). Instead of 'art converted,' which is not warranted by the Greek, we should read, 'hast turned,' or 'repented.' These are three instances out of a multitude in which the authorised translation gives a Calvinistic turn to passages in the New Testament.

It may be objected that this subject is pursued with undue

prolixity: but it should not be forgotten that regeneration after, and independently of baptism, is the very corner-stone of the Evangelical system. The importance of *being* converted is the staple of Evangelical literature. Books, pamphlets, tracts, sermons abound in references to this tenet; and yet the authentic documents of the Reformation have not one word about it. To my mind, as to many others, the idea of a conversion wrought in a man by a power external to himself, and independent of his own will, is a mere parody of Christianity. But whether I am right or wrong on that point, certain it is that Cranmer and the contemporary Reformers had no such tenet. They say much about the regeneration in baptism; nothing about regeneration after baptism: much about a man converting himself; not a word about his being converted. The distinction is fundamental.

The extract from Cranmer's 'Homily of Salvation,' which has been given in the previous page, has a special significance, because it is considerably later in date than the Articles of 1536. Those Articles appeared in the reign of Henry VIII., and it might be said that the compilers were to some extent influenced by the known opinions of that king. But no such suggestion can be made with reference to the 'Homily of Salvation' published in 1547, and again in 1548, that is, in the reign of Edward VI. Here, beyond all question, Cranmer spoke his own mind. And there is not the slightest reason to suppose he ever altered his opinion on this subject. With respect to other matters, undoubtedly his sentiments underwent a great change towards the close of his life—notably with regard to the eucharist and the salvation of unbaptised infants—(Jenkyns's 'Remains of Cranmer,' vol. I., 76). But with respect to baptism he appears to have remained stedfast to the last. He never recognised any other regeneration but that of baptism; and his view on this subject is identical with that which the Church of England to this day expresses in the plainest and most distinct language in her Baptismal Service. This homily is the more important because it has been expressly sanctioned by the Church of England. It is cited under the title, 'The Homily of Justification'—(Todd, p. 14) in the eleventh of the Thirty-nine Articles, which our clergy are required to subscribe.

It would be easy to multiply proofs that the Reformers recognise no other regeneration but that of baptism. Phrases treating this doctrine as indisputable occur in their works. Thus Ridley speaks in his 'Piteous Lamentation,'

of the profession made by a man 'in his regeneration when he is received into the Holy Catholic Church of Christ'—('Works of Ridley,' ed. for Parker Society, p. 57). Again in the Brief Declaration of the Lord's Supper, he says, 'The water in baptism is sacramentally changed into the fountain of regeneration'—(Ibid. p. 12.) To the same effect Latimer says, 'The converting of the whole world is by rags, by things which are most vile in this world. For to go to the matter; what is so common as water? Every foul ditch is full of it; yet we wash our remission of sins by baptism, for like as [Christ] was found in rags, so we must find him by baptism. Where we begin, we are washed with water; and then the words are added: for we are baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, whereby the baptism receiveth his strength'—('Works of Latimer,' vol. II. p. 127). This is from a sermon preached at Grimsthorpe in 1552. I am careful to note the date, because it shows that the opinions quoted are those which Latimer avowed after the terrorism of Henry VIII. had ceased, and when, under the auspices of Edward VI., the work of Reformation proceeded freely. Henry VIII. had a facile way of ending controversies, by cutting off the heads of his opponents: and disparagers of the Reformers have often suggested that their teaching was affected by that consideration. But in 1552 that tyranny was overpast, and the courtly influence was in favour of Protestantism.

§ 3. *The position of the Church in reference to Protestantism after the reign of Edward VI.*

The Reformed Church in the reign of Edward VI. maintained doctrines fundamentally opposed to those of the Protestants, and never held ecclesiastical communion with them. In the next reign, that of Mary, the Pope's supremacy was restored, all Acts of Parliament in favour of the Reformation were repealed, several bishops who had been deposed in the preceding reign for nonconformity were restored to their sees, and many others who were deemed heretics were deprived and exiled, or perished at the stake.

During this happily brief reign the work of Reformation was of course entirely suspended. We shall find that when it was resumed in the reign of Elizabeth the English Church maintained its former independence, and the efforts to effect a union between it and the Protestants entirely failed. The

attempts to establish such a union constitute one of the most interesting and instructive portions of our Church history.

Shortly after the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth a revised Book of Common Prayer was authorised by Act of Parliament. In the revision, says Heylyn, there was great care taken for expunging all such passages as might give scandal or offence to the Popish party, or be urged by them in excuse for their not coming to church with the rest of the congregation in God's public worship. It was ordered by the Queen's injunctions that the sacramental bread should be made in the fashion of wafers, that the Lord's table should be placed where the altar stood, that the accustomed reverence should be made at the name of Jesus, music retained in the churches, and the old festivals observed. 'By which compliances and the expunging of the passages before remembered the book was made so passable amongst the Papists, that for ten years they generally repaired to their parish churches without doubt or scruple'—(Heylyn, p. 283).

'The schismatics at Frankfort had no sooner heard of Queen Mary's death but they made what haste they could for England. . . . . But notwithstanding all their haste they came not time enough to effect their purposes, either in reference to the Liturgy or the Queen's Government; on which the Queen had so resolved according to her own most excellent judgment that they were not able to prevail in either project. It grieved them at the heart that their own prayers might not be made the rule of worship in their congregations, and that they might not lord it here in their several parishes as Calvin did in the presbytery of the Church of Geneva. Some friends they had about the Queen, and Calvin was resolved to make use of all his power and credit both with her and Cecil (as appears by his letters unto both) to advance their ends; and he was seconded therein by Peter Martyr, who thought his interest in England to be greater than Calvin's, though his name was not so eminent in other places. But the Queen had fixed herself on her resolution of keeping the Church in such outward splendour as might make it every way considerable in the eye of the world; so that they must have faith enough to remove a mountain before they could have hope enough to draw her to them'—(Heylyn, p. 304).

From this narrative it is quite clear that there was no union of the Church of England with Protestantism in the reign of Elizabeth. The Articles of Religion which in

that reign were agreed upon by Convocation were 'in general thought by the Genevians and Zuinglian gospellers to have too much in them of the Pope or too little of Calvin, and therefore not to be subscribed by any who desired the reputation of keeping a good conscience with faith unfeigned, of which number none so much remarkable as Father John Fox, the martyrologist'—(Heylyn, p. 337).

Fox, whose 'Acts and Monuments' appeared in the reign of Elizabeth, uses the word 'Protestant' in such a manner as to show that he did not consider it applicable generally to members of the Church of England. Referring to the reign of Henry VIII. he says, 'Although public authority then lacked to maintain the open preaching of the gospel, yet the secret number of the true professors was not much unequal. Certes the fervent zeal of those Christian days seemed much superior to our days and times, as manifestly may appear by their sitting up all night in reading and hearing. . . . . They were noted and termed among themselves by the name of "known men," or "just fast men," as now they are called Protestants'—('Acts and Monuments,' ed. by Townsend, vol. IV.). It is clear by the context that the persons to whom he refers were Dissenters. A paper prefatory to his 'Acts and Monuments' is entitled 'Four considerations given out to the Christian Protestants, professors of the Gospel'—(Ibid. vol. I., p. 34). In the first paragraph he states that these considerations are addressed to the 'Christian gospellers.' He evidently refers not to members of the Church of England or to any settled congregation, but to a number of persons scattered in different parts of the country whose religious sentiments resembled his own.

The determination of Elizabeth to maintain the episcopal government and regular discipline of the Church of England is shown very notably in the history of Archbishop Grindall. He was a friend and correspondent of Calvin, and when Bishop of London had used his influence to obtain for the French Protestants in London liberty to have a church of their own—(Heylyn, 305). When Grindall became Archbishop of Canterbury he gave great offence to the Queen by his leniency to schismatics, and especially by refusing to obey her orders for the suppression of 'prophesyings,' or meetings for worship and discussion of religious subjects in private houses. For these offences he was suspended from his office, and confined to his house by order of the Star Chamber—(Cardwell, 'Annals of the Reformation,' vol. I., p. 431). By an erroneous con-

struction of a statute 13 Elizabeth, several persons were admitted to the ministry of the Church of England with no better than Presbyterian ordination. But this laxity of practice was not of long continuance. Grindall's successor, Whitgift, in 1584, formally disallowed the validity of Presbyterian orders, and restored and re-established the rule of the Church which disallows any ordination which is not Episcopal—('Bramhall's Works,' Ang.-Cath. Lib., vol. V., p. 135; 'Hooker's Works' by Keble, vol. I. p. 76).

We may pass over the succeeding reigns of James I. and Charles I., and the Interregnum, because there is no pretence for saying that during those periods the Church of England formed any new alliances. The Hampton Court conferences held by James I. with the English Bishops and some of the Puritans did not produce any change in her system. She adhered to the Episcopal Government maintained by the Reformers, and not until the time of Charles II. do we find any serious attempt made to alter her fundamental principles.

The Act of Uniformity passed in the year 1662 directed that every clergyman should be ordained, if he had not before received episcopal ordination. This Act required the clergy to declare their assent to the Book of Common Prayer as revised by Convocation in the previous year. The preface printed at the commencement of the Prayer Book now in use was added at the same time, and is said to have been drawn up by Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln. This preface shows very plainly that the great purpose of the Reformed Church of England was not to set up a new religion of its own, but to uphold the doctrines and principles of primitive Catholic Christianity. The authority of the Fathers is repeatedly recognised. Thus in the part entitled 'Concerning the Service of the Church,' it is said with reference to the Common Prayers in the Church, commonly called Divine Service: 'The first original and ground whereof if a man would search out by the ancient Fathers, he shall find that the same was not ordained but of a good purpose, and for a great advancement of godliness.' In the next paragraph reference is made to the 'godly and decent order of the ancient Fathers,' and a little further on we have this significant statement: 'So that here you have an Order for Prayer, and for the reading of the Holy Scripture, much agreeable to the mind and purpose of the old Fathers.' In the third paragraph of the Preface the compilers say that they have rejected sundry alterations proposed to them, which were 'of dangerous consequence, as secretly

striking at some established doctrine, or laudable practice of the Church of England, or indeed of the whole Catholic Church of Christ.'

Probably the passage refers to the celebrated Savoy Conference of 1661, respecting which the following account, taken from Hume's 'History of England' will here suffice: 'A conference was held in the Savoy between twelve Bishops and twelve leaders among the Presbyterian Ministers, with an intention, at least on pretence, of bringing about an accommodation between the parties. The surplice, the cross in baptism, the bowing at the name of Jesus, were anew canvassed; and the ignorant multitude were in hopes that so many men of gravity and learning could not fail, after deliberate argumentation, to agree in all points of controversy. They were surprised to see them separate more inflamed than ever, and more confirmed in their several prejudices.'

Similar attempts at comprehension of Dissenters within the pale of the Church were made with like success, later in the same reign. Charles II. being an eminently pious and godly king, displayed great anxiety about the 'Protestant religion.' His speech at the opening of Parliament, February 10, 1667-8, concludes with these words: 'And for the settling of a firm peace, as well at home as abroad, one thing more I hold myself obliged to recommend to you at this present, which is that you would seriously think of some course to beget a better union and composure in the minds of my Protestant subjects in matters of religion; whereby they may be induced not only to submit quietly to the Government, but also cheerfully give their assistance to the support of it.'

An excellent account of the subsequent attempts at comprehension is given in a note to Thorndike's 'True Principle of Comprehension'—(Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology; 'Thorndike's Works,' vol. V.). The negotiations were carried on by Baxter, Dr. Manton and Dr. Bates on the Presbyterian side; and by Dr. Wilkins (afterwards Bishop of Chester) and others on the part of the Church. Dr. Wilkins offered that persons who had been ordained by Presbyters should be admitted to the ministerial function by the imposition of the hands of the bishop, that the kneeling at the sacrament, the use of the cross in baptism, and the bowing at the name of Jesus, should be left indifferent or disused; that every clause in the baptismal service connecting regeneration with baptism should

be omitted, and that alterations should be made in the Burial and several other Services. The Presbyterians on their part required that the use of the surplice should be left indifferent, and that the part of the Catechism relating to the Sacraments should be entirely changed. It does not appear that Wilkins and his colleagues had any authority to make and carry on these negotiations. The scheme came to naught, being stoutly opposed by the House of Commons. With regard to the Presbyterians, the point of re-ordination, according to Baxter, was that which presented the greatest obstacle to comprehension, the Presbyterians stiffly refusing to own their previous orders invalid.

§ 4. *Later use of the word 'Protestant.'*

In the reign of Elizabeth the word 'Protestant' was not applied to the Church of England. The passages above quoted from Fox, who wrote in that reign, show that the appellation, as he understood it, designated Nonconformists. But in the reign of James, the word seems gradually to have been applied to the Church; and we can easily understand that he coming from the land of Calvinism to England would be disposed to include our Church and the Presbyterians under one denomination. In the reign of Charles I., the appellation was colloquially given to Churchmen even by members of the High Church party. Thus Laud, in the conference with Fisher, says: 'The Protestants did not get that name by protesting against the Church of Rome, but by protesting (and that when nothing else would serve) against her errors and superstitions. Do you but remove them from the Church of Rome and our protestation is ended and the separation too. Nor is protestation itself such an unheard-of thing in the very heart of religion. For the Sacraments, both of the Old and New Testaments, are called by your own school "visible signs protesting the faith." Now, if the sacraments be *protestantia*, "signs protesting," why may not men also and without all offence be called Protestants?' (Anglo-Cath. Lib. 'Laud's Works,' vol. II., p. 152).

Of course, in one sense every Christian Church is Protestant, for the word *protestor* not only means to declare *against* anything, but also is used in the sense of *obtestor*, to call to witness. Thus Thomas Aquinas speaks of *signa invisibilia quibus homo fidem suam protestaretur.* It is notorious, however, that that is not the popular meaning of the word Protes-

tant; in modern usage it implies a protest against the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, or rather against some of them which are not specified.

It has been stated that the term originated in Germany, and that at a Diet held in 1529, at Speyer, certain princes and representatives of cities presented a protest against an Imperial brief then recently issued. The Lutherans and Zuinglians united for once to resist this decree. But what on earth have we to do with the Diet of Speyer or the Emperor of Germany, or his disputes with the followers of Luther or Zuinglius? No one will contend that the Church of England has adopted their tenets.

The truth is, that the origin of the appellation is quite forgotten. The special incident which gave occasion for it soon ceased to be remembered, even in Germany, and certainly has no practical importance for us.

In the time of Charles II., Protestantism had become so fashionable and vehement that a man whose Protestantism was doubtful, incurred no small danger. Sir Walter Scott, in 'Peveril of the Peak,' describes a sort of weapon consisting of a piece of ash attached to a swinging club, which bore the name of a Protestant flail. This weapon lies beside the sapient Justice Maulstatute, when Peveril is brought before him in custody. Addressing the prisoner:

'"So young" he said, "and so hardened—lackaday!—and a Papist I'll warrant."

'Peveril had time enough to recollect the necessity of his being at large, if he could possibly obtain his freedom, and interposed here a civil contradiction of his worship's gracious supposition. "He was no Catholic, he said, but an unworthy member of the Church of England."

'"Perhaps, but a lukewarm Protestant notwithstanding," said the sage justice; "there are those among us who ride tantivy to Rome, and have already made half the journey—ahem!'"

At that time, as we all know, truth and justice, religion and piety, flourished in the land. From the king on the throne to the meanest subject, everybody was chaste and truthful, sober and honest. Among other national virtues, none was more conspicuous than our fervent Protestantism.

> Qui méprise Cotin n'estime pas son roi,
> Et n'a selon Cotin, ni Dieu, ni foi, ni loi.

Substitute Protestant for Cotin, and Boileau's well-known lines aptly express the public opinion of the times which Sir

Walter Scott has described with wonderful fidelity. He who despised Protestantism did not respect his king, and according to the Protestants was godless, faithless, and lawless.

But the more popular use of a particular word to designate the Church did not make it theologically accurate. Surely there is a wide distinction between colloquial appellations and official titles. We speak commonly of sunrise and sunset; nobody objects to the words as popular designations of familiar phænomena; but nobody contends that they are astronomically correct. The 25th of March in ordinary parlance is 'Lady-day,' yet all good Protestants would be horrified if the day were seriously considered the Feast of Our Lady. In order to prove that Protestant is really a proper title of the Church of England we must be able to refer to some sufficient authority by which that title is deliberately and advisedly given to the Church.

Not only has the Church never accepted this designation, but at a most serious crisis in her history she deliberately rejected it. In the first year of the reign of William and Mary, Parliament petitioned the Throne to summon Convocation. Many there were, especially Dissenters, who wished to settle all matters in Parliament; but the House of Commons were of opinion that Convocation was the proper place for the consideration of ecclesiastical affairs. Convocation accordingly assembled on the 21st of November 1689. I may here mention that my authority is the very carefully written 'History of Convocation,' by the Rev. Thomas Lathbury, published in 1842. The bishops agreed upon an address thanking the King for his zeal for the Protestant religion in general, and the Church of England in particular. The Lower House refused to adopt this language. When asked by the bishops for their ground of objection, the Prolocutor replied that the Church of England was distinguished by its doctrines as contained in the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, and that the term 'Protestant Churches' was equivocal, since Socinians, Anabaptists, and Quakers, assumed the title. The bishops resisted for a time, but ultimately gave way; and the address in its amended form was quite different from that originally framed, and omitted all allusion to the Protestant religion. The Lower House of Convocation successfully insisted upon the omission of the objectionable title, and grounded their objection on an apprehension 'lest the Church of England should suffer diminution in being joined with foreign Protestant Churches.' It is remarkable, also, that in the king's

reply, thanking Convocation for the address, the offensive word does not occur.

Thus, on the only occasion on which the question was distinctly raised whether the Church of England should assume the same title as the Lutheran and Calvinistic congregations of the Continent, the question was answered in the negative.

One common argument in favour of the word 'Protestant' is founded on the consideration that the word occurs in certain Acts of Parliament. The statute, 1 William and Mary, c. 6, requires that the King at his coronation shall take an oath (*inter alia*) to 'maintain the Protestant Reformed Religion established by Law.' Again, the Act of Union with Scotland, sec. 7, recites that 'it is reasonable and necessary that the true Protestant religion, professed and established by law in the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, should be effectually and unalterably secured.' Also in the Act of Union with Ireland it is enacted 'that the Churches of England and Ireland as now by law established be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called "The United Church of Great Britain and Ireland."'

Protestants point to these enactments triumphantly, and regard them as decisive authorities for their favourite appellation.

Let us consider what is the real nature of this argument. It really amounts to this, that Parliament—a secular body—has higher pretensions to theological accuracy than the divines who established the Liturgy of the Church of England. Up to the time of William III. the word 'Protestant' did not occur in the Coronation Oath. The oath in its ancient form refers to the Church of England or the Church of God, but never to the Protestant Church. It has been shown in the preceding pages how this designation, unknown to the Reformers, gradually came into vogue after the reign of Elizabeth. Charles II. repeatedly professed his anxiety for Protestantism, and William III., with his Dutch sympathies, was of course willing enough to assimilate the English Church to the Reformed congregations of the Continent. The insane conduct of James II. had driven the nation into a Protestant frenzy. Hence the change of the Coronation Oath is easily explained. But before we decide that the use of a particular word in statutes makes that word a correct designation of the Church, we must be prepared to believe in the verbal infallibility of Acts of Parliament.

There are abundant instances of erroneous expressions in statutes. Judges and lawyers have repeatedly commented on

mistakes in them; and the mistakes are never more frequent than in the use of technical expressions. I will content myself with selecting an example which is directly pertinent as it involves theological consideration.

In the celebrated case of Westerton *v.* Liddell one question was whether the communion-table could properly be called an altar. Sir Fitzroy Kelly, in his argument before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, cited the Church Building Acts, 59 George III. c. 134, and 2 & 3 William IV. c. 61, which use the word 'altar,' and define jurisdiction by its position. The Committee in its judgment referred expressly to these statutes, but held that they did not settle the question. Relying on the language of the Prayer Book and various theological writers, the Committee came to the conclusion that 'table' and not 'altar' was the proper word—(Westerton *v.* Liddell, Moore's Special Report).

Now observe the conclusion to which this decision of the Privy Council leads. It shows that the use of a word in an Act of Parliament is not of itself conclusive evidence that the word is used correctly; that in determining the propriety of technical expressions, or 'words of art,' the recognised writers on that branch of knowledge are of higher authority than Parliamentary draughtsmen.

The reader can easily apply this argument to the word 'Protestant' as it occurs in the statutes cited. The Protestants are in this dilemma, either they must accept the word 'altar' on the authority of the Building Acts, or they must allow that the statutory use of 'Protestant' is not conclusive as to the propriety of the word. They must either give up 'Protestant' or submit to 'altar.' It is hard to say which alternative would be most disagreeable to them.

Acts of Parliament by themselves do not give sanction to the use of either the word 'altar' or the word 'Protestant'; they usually employ words according to their current use without much regard to technical precision. Surely we must make a distinction between the legislative effect of a statute and mere incidents, such as the sanction it may give to particular phrases. The direct mandatory authority of Parliament is supreme, but nobody contends that it is an infallible guide in matters of grammar or language.

Up to the time of William III. there was absolutely no authority either of the Legislature or the Church herself for giving her the title Protestant. Up to that time, there is no pretence for saying that was a legal title. There-

fore, if we adopt the theory of verbal infallibility of Acts of Parliament, we arrive at the strange conclusion that the Church became Protestant in the first year of the reign of William and Mary.

§ 5. *General Objections to the word 'Protestant.'*

The authorities cited in the preceding pages show that the title as applied to the Church of England is unhistorical; but beside that there are some formidable objections to it.

In the first place it is hopelessly vague. It has been stated that the Lower House of Convocation in the reign of William III. observed that the term 'Protestant Churches' was equivocal, since Socinians, Anabaptists, and Quakers assumed the title. This argument has never been answered. Nobody can give a definition of Protestantism. Where does it begin, and where end? Does it include Socinians? Does it include Quakers? These two sects probably differ more widely from the Evangelicals than the Evangelicals from the Roman Catholics; and yet certainly claimed the benefit of the Toleration Act in the time of Charles II. Of Catholic faith there is a well-known definition—difficult, indeed, in its application sometimes, but in itself precise and clear. But of Protestantism there is no definition so far as I am aware, and it would puzzle the most subtle brains to invent one.

The published letter in which I first offered my thoughts on this subject called forth a whole host of replies—some of them very acrimonious. One writer, who styled himself a 'Theological Pilgrim,' thus met my argument that the word 'Protestant' does not occur in the Articles, Liturgy, or Homilies: 'My answer is, that nowhere in the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger Catechism, the Shorter Catechism, or the Directions of the General Assembly, does the word "Protestant" occur. Consequently, according to Mr. Cox, the Kirk of Scotland is not Protestant. I wonder what John Knox and Andrew Melville would say to that argument if they should come to life again? I had imagined that the Kirk of Scotland was the most Protestant Church in the world; that it was instinct with the very spirit of Protestantism; and that its ministers taught the Protestantism of the Protestant religion. But I now learn that it is not Protestant, because it does not carry the name of Protestant in its confession of faith.'

The reply to all this is obvious. I said not one word

about the Kirk of Scotland. If the members of that institution choose to call themselves Protestants, nobody on this side of the Tweed is likely to have any objection. The 'Theological Pilgrim' wonders what John Knox would say to my argument if he could come to life again. My answer is that I have not the slightest curiosity to know what John Knox would be likely to say on that or any other subject.

One public writer endeavoured to refute me in a very summary manner. He said that it was as reasonable to deny that the Government of England is a 'monarchy' as to deny that the Church of England is Protestant. This is an amusing instance of accidental accuracy. I quite agree with this observation, and have only to add that the Government of England is *not* a monarchy. The word 'monarchy' is unknown to our law. It means 'sole rule' which is repugnant to the English constitution. The supreme governor of this realm is not a monarch, but a king or queen, and the foolish phrase 'limited monarchy,' which is often used by shallow writers, is a contradiction in terms.

It is agreed that the word 'Protestant' in popular acceptance is equivalent to 'anti-Romanist.' Hence it is commonly argued that the title is applicable to the Church of England because certain of her Articles protest against errors of the Church of Rome. Quite true. And in her Ninth Article, she protests against an error of the Pelagians. Again, the Nineteenth Article protests against errors of the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch. Again, the Thirty-eighth Article protests against an error of the Anabaptists. There is, therefore, just as much authority for calling our Church anti-Pelagian, or anti-Judaic, or anti-Alexandrian, or anti-Antiocheian, or anti-Anabaptist, as for calling her anti-Romanist.

It is quite true that the Church of England did once protest against errors, grievous errors of Rome, and the Reformers sealed that protest with their blood. It does not follow that the title Protestant is to be applied to the English Church for ever afterwards, as if she had nothing else—had nothing else to do, but to protest. Peers occasionally protest against votes of the House of Lords, but do not thereby acquire the title of Protesters for the rest of their lives. The Acts for the Reform of the House of Commons were effective protests against corruptions and abuses in Parliamentary elections; but it would be absurd to call all succeeding Parliaments protesting Parliaments.

The word 'Protestant' is a petulant aggressive word, which implies that our Church has no better work to do than to utter defiance of another communion; that her function is negative, not positive; to expose error, not to teach truth. To make the Church accept this objectionable title is to make her creed a mere negation of the doctrines of another communion. But a creed is essentially positive, not negative. It runs 'I believe,' not 'I do not believe.' Protestantism avows itself opposed to Catholicity. But the Church of England requires her members to declare their belief 'in one Catholic and Apostolic Church,' and until the Low Church party get those words expunged from the Prayer Book, it will be vain for them to deny the Catholicity of the Church of England.

§ 6. *The Public Worship Regulation Act*, 1874.

Some readers may ask of what importance is a name? Of what consequence is it whether the Church be called Protestant or not?

Of no consequence whatever if the name be a mere fancy: if like the Christian names given to children, it be chosen quite arbitrarily.

But if a name be made the foundation of a theory of Church government, it becomes a matter of great moment indeed.

The extreme anxiety of the Low Church party to force upon the Church of England the *alias* or nickname of Protestant is perfectly intelligible. If she has adopted the thing which they understand to be Protestantism, they have a ready excuse of their own disregard of rubrics, and their eagerness to prosecute their opponents under the Public Worship Act, 1874. The main provisions of that measure are briefly as follows: The Act is to come into operation on the first day of July 1875. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are empowered to appoint a permanent judge of their Provincial Courts. An archdeacon, churchwarden, or three parishioners, being members of the Church of England, may make a representation to the bishop of the diocese respecting any illegal ornaments or furniture of a church, or any unlawful ornament of the minister, or neglect to use any prescribed ornament or vesture of the minister, or unlawful alterations of, additions to, or omissions of rites and ceremonies. If the bishop, 'after considering the whole circumstances of the case,' thinks that pro-

ceedings should not be taken on the representation, he has to record his reasons in writing. Otherwise, he transmits a copy of the representation to the incumbent. By consent of the parties on either side, the bishop may adjudicate. But if such consent is not given, the judge decides after hearing evidence in open Court. From his decision there is an appeal to the Queen in Council. Obedience to the order of the bishop or judge may be enforced by inhibiting the incumbent to exercise the cure of souls for a period not exceeding three months. Provisions are made for analogous proceedings with reference to cathedrals and collegiate churches.

The bishop, it will be observed, has the power of stopping the proceedings *in limine*. If after considering the whole circumstances of the case, he is of opinion that they ought not to be taken, he is to state his reasons; the statement is to be recorded in the registry of the diocese, and there the matter will end. The vague slipshod phrase 'considering the whole circumstances of the case,' gives him a broad hint that he is to act not on principles of strict justice and law, but according to his notions of expediency and policy. Bacon has an excellent saying *optima est lex quæ minimum relinquit arbitrio judicis*: the best law is that which leaves as little as possible to the discretion of the judge. Here, however, the operation of an Act of Parliament depends wholly upon the uncontrolled will of the bishops. What is the inevitable consequence? In different dioceses there will be different systems of public worship. A Protestant bishop will give facilities for prosecution of Ritualists, but he certainly will not assist in checking the numerous infractions of rubrics and canons by the Low Church clergy. I allow that the contrary rule may prevail when the bishop is a High Churchman. But is it desirable that England should be parcelled out in this way into High Church and Low Church districts? Is it desirable that we should have maps of the country shaded like geological maps to show the different ecclesiastical strata?

The *sole* government of bishops is contrary to the ancient usage of the Church. 'The Chapters of Cathedral Churches' says the learned Thorndike, 'are by their birthright counsellors to the bishop and assistants in his whole office; the archdeacon his minister and principal commissary; those, by the rule first set on foot by the Apostles, and observed always by the Church, of planting Cathedral Churches in cities, and making the churches planted in cities Cathedral Churches for

the Government of all Christendom within the territories of those cities'—('Thorndike's Works,' An.-Cath. Lib., vol. V., p. 457). If the whole body of the clergy represented by the Chapter acted as advisers, there would be some protection against a partial one-sided application of the Public Worship Act. But this statute gives to the diocesan a strictly *monarchical* power, repugnant to our ancient ecclesiastical constitutions. The fate of each peccant parson depends on the edict of Dr. Proudie, penned in his comfortable library at Barchester Towers, with no other counsellors than the bishopess and his impertinent attendant the Rev. Mr. Slope.

The Act of 1874 violates not only ecclesiastical rule, but also the fundamental principle of secular jurisprudence. It is a sound constitutional rule, that appeals to the tribunals should be given not *ex gratiâ* but *ex debito justitiæ*. I will cite only one authority for this proposition. In 1704 there was a celebrated dispute between the two Houses of Parliament, arising, as Lord Campbell says in his 'Life of Lord Somers,' from an attempt of an 'Ultra Tory House of Commons, by an abuse of Parliamentary usage, to encroach on the liberty of the subject.' In a masterly address of the Lords to the Crown, drawn up by Lord Somers, it was demonstrated that, according to the cardinal principles of our law, appeals ought to be granted *ex debito justitiæ*, and not of grace or favour. In the case before us the right to take legal proceeding is made a matter of favour. The caprice of the bishop is disguised by the convenient phrase, 'whole circumstances of the case.' He is invested with an absolute despotic power of determining whether High Church or Low Church practices shall prevail in his diocese.

It is easy enough to understand the extreme anxiety of the Evangelical party to get the Persecution Bill passed at the present juncture. The amazing judgment pronounced *ex parte* in the case of Mr. Purchas has given them an advantage which they are most anxious to utilise to the utmost before it is reversed, as it in all probability will be. I ask anyone who can think dispassionately and understand the English language, to look at the rubric before the Prayer of Consecration: 'When the priest, standing before the table, hath so ordered the bread and wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the bread before the people, and take the cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth.' In the earlier case of 'Martin *v.* Mackonochie,' in 1868, Lord Cairns and other members of the

Judicial Committee held that the words 'standing before the table' apply to the whole sentence. I venture to say that nobody acquainted with English will dispute the accuracy of that construction. But in the *Purchas case*, in 1871, another construction was adopted by another set of judges; and it was held that the north side of the table was the proper place of the minister throughout the Communion Service.

The mode in which the judges arrived at this conclusion is such an astounding specimen of judicial reasoning that to avoid a suspicion of mis-quotation, I give their own words.

Their Lordships 'think that the words "before the table" do not necessarily mean between the table and the people, and are not intended to limit to any side. The learned judge in the Court below in considering the charge against the Respondent, that he stood with his back to the people during the Prayer of Consecration, briefly observes "the question appears to me to have been settled by the Privy Council in the case of Martin *v.* Mackonochie."' They add, that the judge of the Court below takes the judgment in Martin *v.* Mackonochie to mean 'that the words *standing before the table* apply to the whole sentence, and that *before the table* means *between the table and the people on the west side*—but that is mere assumption.'

That is to say, the Judicial Committee seriously state that, *before the table* does not mean *in front of it*, but *at one of the narrow ends of it.* This is not a question of ecclesiastical or legal learning, nor of any learning beyond a knowledge of our own mother-tongue, and the meaning of one of the most common words in it. 'Before,' according to the Committee, means 'beside.' They might as well say the minister stood before the table if he got underneath it or at the back of it. They might as well tell me I was walking before a man if I walked by his side. If the whole Privy Council, Judicial Committee, and all, were to tell a peasant that that was the meaning of the word 'before' they would not get him to believe them.

The Purchas judgment will not withstand serious criticism. It was decided in the absence of Mr. Purchas, and it is so palpably absurd that it cannot be taken to have settled the law. But the Low Church party have got a temporary advantage by it, and the Persecution Act, if it should ever be put in force, will enable them to use it as a powerful weapon against their opponents.

Parliament has legislated under the influence of a Protes-

tant panic. It did so many years ago when it passed the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. A few years later Parliament had to retrace its steps ignominiously. The Act became a dead letter, and was repealed with scarcely a dissentient voice. That is always the fate sooner or later of measures of persecution. They defeat their own object. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill made martyrs of the Roman Catholics. The pending Ecclesiastical Offences Bill makes martyrs of the Ritualists. And in England, in modern times, martyrdom is always an advantageous and desirable position. Leave the Ritualists alone, and what is extravagant in their practices or doctrines will be quietly and surely corrected by the good common sense of the English people. But oppress them, put into the hands of their foes an instrument of torture, and you instantly enlist in their favour the sympathies of thousands of moderate Churchmen who have never joined their standard.

The Low Church clergy, who are so eager to prosecute their opponents, themselves habitually violate the rubrics. For instance, they persist in using the black gown, though it is prohibited by one of the canons and declared illegal by the Judicial Committee.

The 58th Canon of 1603, directs that 'every minister saying the Public Prayers, or ministering the Sacraments or other Rites of the Church, shall wear a comely surplice with sleeves, to be provided at the charge of the parish.' The Judicial Committee, in their judgment in 1871, in the case of Herbert *v.* Purchas, say, 'Their Lordships are of opinion that as the Canons of 1603–4, which in one part seemed to revive the vestments, and in another to order the surplice in all other ministrations, ought to be construed together, so the Act of Uniformity is to be construed with the two canons on this subject which it did not repeal, and that the result is that the cope is to be worn in ministering the Holy Communion on high feast days in Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches, and the surplice in all other ministrations'—(3 Law Rep. Privy Council, 649).

The defenders of black preaching gowns endeavour to creep out of the grasp of the canon and this decision by a piece of sophistry. They contend that the sermon is not a rite or part of their ministrations. This is ingenious rather than ingenuous. The sermon not a part of their ministrations! Why; everybody knows that the Evangelical clergy consider preaching the most important of all their ministrations, and that a service is worth nothing unless there is a sermon in it.

Their practice is commonly this. At one part of the Communion Service they leave the congregation and go into the vestry to change the surplice for the black gown; after the sermon is over, if there be a celebration of the Holy Communion, they go back to the vestry to change the black gown for the surplice. These two superfluous ceremonies—the double change from white to black and from black to white—are introduced without a tittle of authority, and in direct disobedience to one of the canons, by men who profess an abhorrence of redundant ceremonies. These, forsooth, are the people who clamour for special legislation for the punishment of offenders against the rubrics.

Take another instance: the Prayer Book requires that the Prayer for the Church Militant shall be read on all Sundays and Holy Days. At the end of the Communion office is this direction: 'Upon the Sundays and other Holy-Days, (if there be no Communion,) shall be said all that is appointed at the Communion, until the end of the general Prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here on earth.' Words cannot be plainer; and yet this direction is habitually disregarded.

Again, the rubric after the offertory, requires that the 'priest' shall 'then' place the elements on the table. The Privy Council has decided that 'then' means 'not before' But in Evangelical Churches the elements are placed on the table not at the proper time—not by the priest at all—but by the pew-opener before the admission of the congregation.

In Westerton *v.* Liddell the Judicial Committee say:

'The rubric directs that at a certain point in the course of the Communion Service (for this is no doubt the meaning of the rubric) the minister shall put bread and wine on the Communion Table; but where they are to be placed previously is nowhere stated. In practice they are usually placed on the Communion Table before the commencement of the service, but this certainly is not according to the order prescribed. Nothing seems less objectionable than a small side table from which they may be conveniently reached by the officiating minister, and at the proper time transferred to the Communion Table'—(Westerton *v.* Liddell; Moore's Special Report, p. 187).

And yet, notwithstanding this authoritative exposition of the rubric, it is systematically violated. It cannot be said in extenuation of this breach of the law that it is a matter of no importance. The oblation of the elements is considered by the most eminent theologians to be an integral and essential

part of the Communion Service. According to the usage of primitive Christianity, the elements of bread and wine for the eucharist were taken out of the oblations of the people, and it was usual to make a commendatory prayer by way of oblation to God antecedent to those eucharistical prayers which were appropriated to the consecration of the elements—(Bingham, 'Antiquities of the Christian Church,' book xv. ch. i).

To the same effect Johnson in his 'Unbloody Sacrifice,' written at the commencement of the last century, states that 'all the antient liturgies direct the priest first to make the oblation; then to pray for the Descent of the Holy Spirit or the Divine Benediction;' and he adduces authorities to show that the word 'oblations' which occurs in our Prayer Book in the Prayer for the Church means principally the bread and wine—(Johnson's Works, Ang.-Cath. Lib., vol. I., p. 333; vol. II., p. 386).

Whether these views be accepted or not, this at least is clear, that the rubrics would not give specific directions for the placing of the elements on the table by the priest at a particular part of the service unless the compilers of the Liturgy had considered that ceremonial essential to the proper celebration of the Holy Communion. The minister has no right to set his own private judgment above the judgment of the Church, and to say that he will disregard the rubric because he considers it unimportant.

The same observation applies to the wholesale mode of delivering the bread and wine to the communicants. The Prayer Book requires the minister to say certain solemn words to each communicant separately. To save time, and in defiance of grammar and rubric, the words are often in Evangelical churches said to a whole 'rail-full' of communicants at once.

It is remarkable that in the Savoy Conference in the reign of Charles II. one of the exceptions of the Presbyterians against the Book of Common Prayer was directed to this very matter. They desired 'that the minister be not required to deliver the bread and wine into every particular communicant's hands and to repeat the words to each one in the singular number, but that it may suffice to speak them to divers jointly according to our Saviour's example'—(Cardwell's 'Conferences,' 321). Whatever may be thought of this argument, it is certain that it did not prevail, and that the rubric as it stands gives a direction which the Low Church clergy take upon themselves to disregard.

I will cite one more instance of law-breaking on the part of those who desire to strictly enforce the law against others.

'And all priests and deacons are to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer either privately or openly, not being let by sickness or some other urgent cause. And the curate that ministereth in every parish church or chapel being at home and not being otherwise reasonably hindered, shall say the same in the parish church or chapel where he ministereth, and shall cause a bell to be tolled thereunto a convenient time before he begin, that the people may come to hear God's Word and to pray with him.'

It is superfluous to add that this positive command is systematically set at nought by a section of the clergy. It is painful to have to notice those acts of disobedience and defiance of laws which they have solemnly promised to observe. It is very difficult to speak of these matters without seeming to condemn wholesale many clergymen whose earnestness, zeal, and Christian charity, entitle them to reverence. I can truly say that many of the Evangelical clergy I revere from my heart for the noble examples of self-denial which they set in their ministrations, especially among those who are afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate. I wish I could find some form of language which would set forth my argument without seeming to reflect upon such men as these. I firmly believe that many disobey from mere inattention; but in justice it must be asked how they can reconcile it to their consciences to invoke against others laws which they themselves habitually violate. Why should the Low Church clergy have a monopoly of lawlessness? Why are they to have the exclusive luxury of prosecuting their antagonists? Be it remembered that we are told on authority that the object of the Public Worship Act is to put down Ritualism. It may be said that the measure may be put in force against both parties indifferently. But the proceedings must receive the sanction of the diocesan, and does anyone seriously suppose that a 'Protestant' bishop or archbishop would allow proceedings against a clergyman for wearing a black preaching gown, for example? The measure is, and must be, one-sided in its operation in each particular diocese, because its enforcement depends on the will of the diocesan. The result must be that administration of the law will be different in different dioceses.

But I will go further, and ask why the bishops and archbishops themselves are to claim immunity from the operation of the Act. It contains no provisions for prosecuting them, though they also constantly violate rubrics. I will give one

very glaring instance: In the Order of Confirmation the bishop is required to lay his hands on each child and say certain words to him or her separately and individually. To save trouble, however, and to afford time for a Protestant 'address,' for which there is not the slightest authority, many bishops say the words to a whole batch of children at once.

The Public Worship Bill is tainted with a vice which is most odious to Englishmen when they exercise their sober judgment—partiality and respect of persons. It favours men high in authority, and constitutes them and their adherents a privileged class. Parliament has legislated under the influence of a Protestant panic. When that panic has ceased, men will wonder how the Legislature could have adopted an Act which manifestly violates that first principle of legislation—the equality of all subjects before the law.

About forty years ago earnest Churchmen began to utter a protest against Protestantism. They thought the words, 'I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church' were not without meaning, and that the best way of making the ministrations of the Church effective was to restore Catholic and Apostolic practice. We have now had considerable experience of this movement, and the results are not discouraging. Forty years ago the service in our parish churches was conducted in a duet between parson and clerk. The congregation got all their worship done for them vicariously. The minister turned his face to them when he read the prayers, as if it was the people and not God whom he addressed. The confession, prayers, and responses which the rubric requires to be said by the whole congregation, were repeated by an illiterate functionary, called the clerk, who was paid to relieve them of that trouble. This performance took place in portentous three-storeyed rostra, in which the performers were placed at different altitudes, according to their relative importance; the clerk lowest, the reader next, and high above all the preacher. The preacher occupied the pre-eminent position, for the main object of going to church was not to worship—not 'to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at His hands, to set forth His most worthy praise, to hear His most Holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul'—but to hear sermons. The squire of the parish had his cushioned and curtained pew, and behind those curtains the family from the great-house could doze unobserved. The

gallery held another class of important performers, the vocalists, among whom were generally some squalling females, eager to display themselves in trashy florid music. This was what went on in country places. 'Common' prayer, that is, prayer sent up to heaven by a whole congregation, was not thought of. In fashionable proprietary chapels, and similar 'places' of worship in towns, the mode of conducting the service was no better. The front seats in the gallery were occupied by well-dressed sinners who carried handsomely bound Prayer Books. They paid high prices for the best places, just as play-goers pay highly for the pit stalls and seats in the dress circle.

The churches and chapels of that period were hideous structures, built of shamefully cheap and vile materials. Anything was good enough for God's house. Any kind of economy might be practised there. To save space the basement was sometimes let as wine vaults; the chancel was dispensed with as superfluous; the seats for the poor (if there were any) were so narrow that they could not kneel; only the best priced places were made comfortable. The whole concern was managed with a view to commercial profit.

Great improvements in these respects have been effected during the last few years by the influence of that party in the Church, which a minister of the Crown thinks he will be able to put down. The parish clerk, the 'three-decker,' the squire's curtained pew, the huge galleries, the squalling female singers, and other Protestant institutions, though they have not wholly disappeared, have become comparatively rare. The horribly ugly churches of the reign of Anne and the Georgian era remain, but any modern architect would be ashamed to follow such examples. Much of the improvement is undoubtedly due to the Cambridge Camden, or Ecclesiological Society, which by its publications carried on an ultimately successful crusade against Georgian church architecture and its concomitants. The modern churches are far better. They are for the most part built solidly and substantially, with chancels of respectable size, and open seats which give room for kneeling. But what is infinitely more important, t e mode of conducting Divine Service is vastly improved. People are beginning to realise what is meant by *common* prayer, and to understand that a church is a house of prayer and not a lecture hall.

It cannot be denied that these results are due to the efforts of the High Church clergy. So far from approximating to Roman practice, they have promoted a mode of conducting

Divine service strongly condemned by Popish writers. It was an objection of one of them, Cassabutius, against the Reformed Liturgy, that people bore a part in the psalmody. He condemned the practice as a novelty and a Protestant whim. We know that in Roman Catholic services the congregation are merely auditors and spectators. It is one of the most admirable characteristics of our own Liturgy that the congregation is called upon to take a large part in the service. In this respect, as Bingham shows ('Antiquities of the Christian Church,' chap. xiv.), the Reformers of our Liturgy followed the example of the early Christians. 'It is as clear as the sun at noon-day,' he says, 'that the people generally had a share in the psalmody of the ancient Church; and that this was not an exercise strictly confined to the canonical singers or any particular order in the Church; but that men, women, and children were all allowed to bear a part in it, under the direction and conduct of precentors.'

If politicians and Protestants were not grossly ignorant of Liturgiology they would understand that many of the Ritualistic practices which they condemn as Popish are in the highest degree offensive to the Papists, and are revivals of usages which our Reformers established in accordance with the ritual of primitive Christianity.

That in the recent efforts to restore ancient standards some errors have been committed we may freely acknowledge.

In any general movement it will always happen that among the great numbers who take part in it some are unlearned and indiscreet. But with regard to the Ritualistic clergy generally, it cannot be disputed that they possess far more learning than their opponents, and that their energies and the trials which they endure attest at least their sincerity. The Ritualist finds his way into the filthy fever-laden hovels of London and our other large towns, where misery and crime and disease in their most repulsive forms do not daunt him from fulfilling his mission of charity. It is clear that the love of lucre is not the motive of his actions, for his stipend is a pittance which a skilled artisan would regard with contempt. He is the scoff of the populace; the whole of the newspaper press is against him; and Parliament singles him out for condemnation and prosecution. Blame him as we may, at least we cannot deny his unselfishness, sincerity, and courage. He is of that stuff that martyrs were made of—they who endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

These men are to be 'put down,' but the task is not quite

so easy as glib politicians imagine. And when they have put down the Ritualistic parson, how do they propose to put down the Ritualistic congregations? Will they interdict them from joining heartily and reverently in the psalmody and responses; will they prohibit them to testify their reverence for the Sacred Name by lowly gesture; will they forbid them to offer largely of their substance for works of charity, and the adornment of the House of God; will they set the police to hinder them from thronging to frequent communion and daily prayer? Yet, all this has to be done before the Legislature can put down the Ritualism of congregations.

Those who have faith in ancient Catholic practice as the true mode of bringing the heathen millions of this land to join in public worship, and to value the Christian Sacraments, have no reason to despond. In every part of England new churches are springing up in which the Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's ordinances. Day by day in ever-increasing numbers the laity are joining in the great revival. Contumely and persecution, continued for more than thirty years, have culminated at last in penal legislation. But the great work of Catholic revival goes on—and on—and on, and the workers have good cause to say, with joy and confidence:

Thy God hath sent forth strength for thee; stablish the thing, O God, that Thou has wrought in us, for Thy temple's sake.

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